

13 Responses When a Prospect Says “We Don’t Have That Business Pain”



Everyone thinks pain is terrible, right?

Everyone except doctors and salespeople.

Some people don’t feel any pain. There’s even a name for this condition: Congenital insensitivity to pain. And it’s not a good thing -- in fact, it’s downright dangerous.

Geoffrey Woods, the geneticist who discovered the condition, told *The New York Times*: “Pain is there for a number of reasons, and one of them is to use your body correctly without damaging it and modulating what you do.”

Yes, it sucks when you sprain your ankle or burn your finger on the stove, but without pain, you wouldn’t know to see the doctor or stop touching the stove. Pain keeps us safe.

When it comes to sales, business pain protects buyers like physical pain protects all of us. People buy products to fix things so their jobs are safe and their companies will grow. If nothing’s broken or underperforming or failing, there’s no reason to change the status quo.

Unlike physical pain, however, business pain isn’t always immediately obvious to those suffering from it. And it’s often a knee-jerk reaction in prospects to say they’re not experiencing problems just to get you off the phone. Here are 13 responses you can use to get a conversation back on track.

13 Responses to the Prospect Objection "We Don't Have That Pain"

1) "What are your goals in relation to [business area]?"

Your prospect might or might not be suffering from business pain, but you won't know for sure until you figure out their ideal situation and diagnose how far they are from it. Use this question to set the stage for their ideal end state.

2) "What does success look like in [business area]?"

Another way to phrase #1, this question has the potential to open up a wider conversation. It's also revealing of any personal stakes your prospect might have in the area -- information you can use to leverage their emotions.

3) "What does failure look like in [business area]?"

Just as compelling as understanding success is understanding failure. Get your prospect to talk through the worst-case scenario with you so you have a reference point of exactly what they're afraid of, and whether it's something your product can help prevent.

4) "As of today, would you say you're closer to success or failure in [business area]?"

If what you've learned suggests that failure is closer to your prospect's current scenario, ask this question to drive the point home. People don't always like being told what to do, so let them formulate the conclusion on their own.

5) "What does your boss obsess about?"

One of HubSpot sales director Dan Tyre's favorite ways to uncover business pain, referencing your point of contact's manager is a good way to get a fuller view of the lay of the land. Managers control budgets, their pain (or success) usually influences their direct reports' lives, and if your prospect has no idea, they're probably too junior to help you.

6) "What strategies are you using to reach [business goal]?"

Maybe your prospect just started a big initiative to address this very problem and it's actually doesn't make sense for them to take on a totally new implementation right now. You never know until you ask.

7) “How are things right now?”

Even if your prospect hasn't realized their pain, your experience will enable you to spot signs of oncoming trouble. Or maybe things are bad, but not bad enough that they think they need a solution. Get them to lay it all out on the table before you make recommendations.

8) “What’s your biggest hairball?”

Another one of Tyre's standbys, this is a lighthearted question that can be very revealing. Get your prospect to talk about what sucks about their day-to-day. If you can fix it, you're a hero.

9) “*Silence.*”

Silence will always be one of salespeople's greatest weapons. Get comfortable with dead air, and you'll find that many people aren't. Which means they'll start talking more, allowing you to judge whether they were just trying to brush you off or they really don't need your product.

10) “What were you hoping to get out of today’s conversation?”

We're all busy people. Which means your prospect wouldn't have agreed to speak to you unless there was something they wanted to learn -- perhaps something you can help with.

11) “Why did you agree to take this meeting?”

This is a more direct way to ask #10. Presumably your prospect dedicated their time to you for a reason. Refocus them on their own objectives.

12) “We’ve found that companies similar to yours experience [specific problem], which prevents them from achieving [business goal]. Does that sound at all familiar?”

Framing your value proposition in this way brings the conversation into the real world. Asking a prospect whether they're having problems in the abstract doesn't yield much, but contextualizing what that problem looks like day-to-day helps bring their understanding into focus.

13) “In [social media post], you / a colleague / company leader referenced [relevant event]. Was there a specific event that spurred that post?”

If you reached out because of a content-based trigger event that suggested your product could be relevant, reference it on your call. If nothing else, you’ll gain context and an understanding of when might be a better time to reach out.